

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W  
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O 151341Z AUG 75

FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3505

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T ASMARA 0697

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS ET

SUBJECT: CISCO TWO

REF: A. BEIRUT 10389 B. ADDIS 9831 C. ADDIS 9811

D. KHARTOUM 1888 E. STATE 192640 F. FBIS AMMAN 141750Z AUG 75

G. ASMARA 0687 H. ASMARA 0674 I. ASK 3837

1. AS SUGGESTED REF B, I INFORMED MCALLISTER OF CISCO THAT WE EXPECT SHORTLY TO HAVE COPY OF CISCO TWO TAPE INTERVIEW AND WILL BE REQUESTING HIM TO AUTHENTICATE VOICES.

2. HOWEVER, I WONDER AT DESIREABILITY OF PASSING SUBSTANCE REF C TO GETACHEW AT THIS JUNCTURE. IT CLEAR THAT HE HAS BEEN KEPT WELL INFORMED BY ADDIS OF DEVELOPMENTS IN CISCO TWO CASE AND ASSUME THIS INFORMATION WILL IN DUE COURSE BE PASSED TO HIM. MY HESITANCY TO DISCUSS MATTER AT THIS TIME WITH GETACHEW STEMS FROM MY CONCERN, REINFORCED BY REF A, THAT EVENTS MAY WELL DEMONSTRATE THAT CISCO TWO ARE HELD BY ELF NOT PLF AND THAT DEMANDS DESCRIBED BY AFEWORKI TO BITTERLIN (REF D) MAY NOT MATERIALIZE. INFORMATION CONTAINED REFS E AND F, AS WELL AS GEOGRAPHY OF SITUATION, STRONGLY SUGGEST TO CONGEN THAT CISCO TWO HELD BY ELF. IT SIMPLY NOT CREDIBLE TO ME THAT PAIR COULD BE TRANSPORTED NORTH THROUGH SAHIL TO SUDAN BY PLF. THIS ENTIRE AREA HAS ALWAYS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE IN CONTROL OF ELF, WHICH HAS NOT PERMITTED PLF INCURSIONS, LET ALONE ESTABLISHMENT OF PLF CAMPS. IT WILL BE RECALLED

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THAT GEN. GETACHEW CLEARLY SHARES THIS VIEW (REF G).

3. HOWEVER, IDENTITY OF FACTION HOLDING CISCO TWO OF IMPORTANCE TO US ONLY TO EXTENT IT HOLDS CLUE AS TO THEIR UNTIMATE DISPOSITION. CHIEF CONCERN IS WHETHER CISCO TWO IN FACT BEING PRESENTLY TAKEN TO SUDAN BORDER WHERE THEY WILL BE RELEASED WITH NO DEMANDS AS CLAIMED BY REPORTED ELF SPOKESMEN, OR WHETHER WE CAN EXPECT DEMANDS SUCH AS THOSE MENTIONED BY AFEWORKI SPEAKING FOR ONE INTERNAL PLF FACTION. IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT THERE WERE SIMILAR ASSERTIONS THAT PAIR WOULD BE TRIED BY ELF WHICH NOW APPEAR TO HAVE NO SUBSTANCE. CONGEN SHARES EMBASSY VIEW (ADDIS ABABA 9809) THAT EXTERNAL POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND INTERNAL MILITARY LEADERSHIP OF BOTH FACTIONS NOT IN CLOSE TOUCH. BELIEVE THIS ALSO TRUE OF VARIOUS MILITARY ELEMENTS OF BOTH FACTIONS WITHIN ERITREA. THEREFORE IT QUITE POSSIBLE THAT AFEWORKI'S CONTENTIONS TO BITTERLIN IN SAME CATEGORY AS THOSE MADE EARLIER BY AHMED NASSER IN KHARTOUM (REFS H AND I). WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT AFEWORKI IN CONTROL CISCO TWO AND ABLE MAKE HIS THREAT GOOD.

4. IN ANY EVENT I WOULD PREFER AT THIS JUNCTURE TO REFRAIN FROM ANY ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION OF CISCO TWO WITH GETACHEW UNTIL ACTUAL SITUATION SOMEWHAT MORE CLARIFIED. I DO NOT BELIEVE ANY DIRE CONSEQUENCES WILL FLOW FROM FACT THAT WE DO NOT IMMEDIATELY REPEAT DIRECTLY TO GETACHEW WHAT IS DISCUSSED AT DIPLOMATIC LEVEL WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY IN ADDIS. I ALSO FEEL ALLEGED ASSERTIONS MADE TO JOURNALISTS, WHO OBVIOUSLY SEEKING SENSATIONALIST MATERIAL THEY CAN SELL, SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN AS HOLY WRIT.  
SHERRY

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